

kansas state collegian



finals guide

monday, may 9, 2011



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Music can be one of the best things to keep you free of distractions while studying. It can sometimes even work towards relaxing you.

Becky Tischer | Collegian

Musical inclinations useful study tool

Sandi Lam
staff writer

Music is enjoyable, while studying is not. So mixing the two makes for a decent time, right? If the appropriate music is selected, the fusion of music and studying can become a highly productive and slightly more tolerable experience. Not choosing the right music, however, can result in a distracted student and, thus, less desirable grades.

Any skepticism that music helps an individual study is understandable; however, for many students, music actually helps.

Allison Bertels, sophomore in secondary education, said she has a difficult time studying in silence and prefers music.

"I would probably be able

to (study without music) but I wouldn't want to," she said.

But what is it that Bertels prefers to listen to while studying?

"Mostly I listen to either my Elton John or Matt and Kim Pandora stations," Bertels said, adding that the genre that comes up with those stations are oldies or alternative pop.

Though she has found what music works for her, Bertels said music still distracts her at times.

"If music is playing that I really don't like, like country music or Nickelback, then it becomes bothersome," she

said.

Websites like Pandora or Slacker allow one to create a personal radio station based on particular artists or a genre of music.

Ryan Wilson, junior in architecture, said he listens to a Slacker station but when it comes to designing for his studio classes or needing to be very focused, he exhausts his other options.

"When I am designing, classical music and classic rock are good," Wilson said. "When I am doing mind-numbing things for projects, I like to listen to books."

When Wilson is in need of

serious concentration, however, he said that he opts for the website simplynoise.com. Simply Noise generates white noise-type sounds, offering a way for students to drown out the distracting noises around them and focus in on the tasks at hand.

Listening to music can be pleasurable and beneficial for some regarding studying, but others work more efficiently in silence, or in Wilson's case, with intentional white noise.

Bertels said students should listen to what they know they enjoy prior to studying with it.

"They won't have to worry about changing around the music while studying," she said. "Pandora is helpful because you know you will like most of the music on your channels, instead of the radio which is 'hit and miss.'"

Ten tips for a successful finals week



Kelsey Castanon

reason people on campus make it through finals week; don't rob people of that opportunity.

6. When stress creeps up on you, have a snack

By snack, I mean Orange Leaf. Not only will you get chocolate (or strawberry, pineapple, birthday cake) relief, it's also a lot more fun to eat something delicious than study. If necessary, you can even bring your study materials to Orange Leaf. If crowded, Cold Stone Creamery is also a good option.

7. Stick around

If your finals are over early or you don't have any finals at all, don't be afraid to stick around. Talk to people, because this is the time to make new friendships. Don't boast about your good fortune at Hale Library, just linger - but make sure to be polite. When new people shoo you away, don't be offended. There's nothing a nice back massage won't cure.

8. Skip the Ritalin

It's important to remember that no amount of studying will account for the 10-straight lectures you missed this semester. There is no use in exhausting your body by caffeine-induced all nighters when in reality, you're only setting yourself up for disappointment.

9. Once it starts, keep your cool

During the final event, also known as your exam, try not to panic. If you don't know any of the answers, there are a few options: Eliminate all but two answers (usually, there are only two answers that could be correct anyway) and, from there, try out your luck with a game of feeny, meeny, miney, moe. It's a classic tale of using your best judgment and trusting in chance.

10. Once it's over, let it be

At the end of a final, remind yourself it was the best you could do. Whether that's the truth or not is irrelevant. Grades typically take a few days to be posted, and that means you have a few days of freedom before Mom and Dad find out what you've been up to all semester. So live those days up!

Use these tools and not only will you leave K-State's campus for the summer with less wrinkles, you will also be five pounds heavier with a slight chance of a beating from Mom and Dad in your forecast.

Kelsey Castanon is a junior in journalism and mass communications. Send comments to edge@pub.ksu.edu.

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Healthy snacks keep energy up during finals



Becky Tinch | Collegian

Keeping hydrated and eating healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables can help you stay alert and can aid you in study sessions for the upcoming finals.

When studying for finals keeps you up late at night and exhausted the next day, resist the urge to order a pizza or reach for a candy bar. While these foods can satisfy immediate hunger, fueling up with food high in fat, sodium and calories can make you feel slow and tired in the long run, according to kidshealth.org. Instead, try reaching for one of the following healthier snacks to stay full and alert during finals week.

Trail Mix

According to hackcollege.com, trail mix can provide a combination of protein, fiber and other nutrients when it includes dried fruit, various nuts and even dark chocolate chips. However, beware of store-bought trail mixes, which can contain high amounts of calories and fat. Making your own trail mix ensures that it contains ingredients you like, and that it is as healthy as possible. Read the ingredients listed on each component before you buy it to make smart purchases.

Vegetables and Dip

Vegetables are very low in calories, fat and cholesterol. In addition, most vegetables contain lots of antioxidants that can help your body protect itself from stress, which is often rampant during finals week. According to nutrition-and-you.com, broccoli is also very high in vitamin C, which could help ward off flu-causing viruses. Pack a

plastic container with fresh vegetables and low-fat dip, and you have a snack that will keep you full, alert and satisfied while you study.

Water

This may sound too simple, but it's an extremely important part of eating healthy. Being dehydrated can cause fatigue and make it hard to stay concentrated. In addition, stay away from caffeinated drinks as much as possible. While a pop or coffee may give you a jolt of energy, it won't provide long-lasting results and may cause a "crash" when the effects of the caffeine wear off. Fsnews.com reported that the caffeine might prevent you from being able to sleep when you actually can, harming yourself even more.

Other healthy snacks include fresh fruit, mini pretzels, on-the-go yogurt, small bags of low-calorie, low-fat popcorn and prepackaged snacks with 100 calories or less. Look for snacks with low sodium, low fat, high protein, fiber, potassium and calcium to stay healthy, alert and energized during finals week. Even though it may require a little more work than going through the drive-thru or ordering a pizza, choosing healthy snacks will pay off in the end.

Jena Sauber is a freshman in journalism and mass communications. Send comments to edge@spub.ksu.edu.

"Cool Treats, Hot Jobs" offers opportunity



Jennifer Heeke | Collegian

Marta Blecha (left), sophomore in elementary education and Amber Engelbert (right), sophomore in elementary education grab free ice cream outside of Holtz Hall Thursday afternoon during the Career and Employment Services "Cool Treats, Hot Jobs."

Ways to manage stress at semester's end

Balasubramanyan Meenakshisundaram
staff writer

Finals week is a period of immense stress for any college student. Back-to-back exams, project submissions and long sleepless nights at the library can put anybody's nerves on edge.

One has to realize that a stressed mind is a slow mind. With stress comes a crippling feeling of being overwhelmed and a mindset of negative feelings. One has to be able to control these emotions and have a clear mind in order to think straight. Stress relief is vital for a clear mind.

Music has always been a great tool of stress relief. While any person's music preference could suffice, soft, soothing music tends to have a calming effect on the brain, by lowering blood pressure and reducing

cortisol. Cortisol is a hormone linked to stress levels, according to an article titled, "10 Simple ways to relieve stress," by Nathan Reese on healthline.com.

Working out is also a way to get out the frustration and stress that builds up. According to Reese, even a simple walk around the block or just standing up from the chair and stretching for a minute would help relieve stress greatly. A workout would help take the mind off studying for a moment, and so when it gets back into it, it will be much crisper.

Talking to friends for a little bit can help relieve stress too, said Aiswariya Deliephan, graduate student in grain science.

"Hearing them say that they are stressed helps relieve (my stress)," Deliephan said. Deliephan also said that

keeping distractions away is a key to getting focused and also making sure the stress is down.

"If you are studying a subject you don't like much, everything else seems more interesting," Deliephan said.

Deep breathing and meditation could help avert stress even before it happens. These techniques train the body and mind through everyday exercises to keep calm and retain focus, according to a healthmind.com article. There are many different forms of meditation like yoga, pilates and Tai Chi - all of which serve toward the same goal, which is to prevent stress from becoming a problem in one's life.

According to an October 2010 stress management article on helpguide.org, keeping a stress journal could help identify the regular stressors one comes across. One has to make a note of every time

one feels stressed, and try and identify the cause and personal response.

The article also addresses some of the bad ways of trying to cope with stress, including commonly considered remedies such as smoking, drinking too much, over or under eating, procrastinating, using pills or drugs to relax, etc.

According to the stress management section on the K-State Healthy Decisions website, or ksu.edu/hd/topics/stress, laughing with friends can take a good load off your shoulders when it comes to stress. Keeping a positive attitude can only positively affect you.

Stress is an integral part of every student's life. Luckily there are a multitude ways out there to keep it from impacting you hugely. So pick your own secret trick to beat the stress and have a cool and productive finals week.

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Logan Jones | Collegian
A man and his son walk around the Downtown Farmer’s Market Saturday morning. The Farmer’s Market is in its first week, and will operate until October.

Study Guide for finals

Don Bolerjack
staff writer

Finals week. These are the two words college students dread. It consists of a week that is spent merely studying and cramming all the semesters’ classes into one week of consistent test taking.

“Finding time to manage all your studies, allocate your time correctly and finding time to sleep and remain sane during the whole process is the toughest part,” said Andrew Lewis, junior in history and political science.

That said, what can you do to make your finals week as simple as possible? Here are some guidelines for studying during finals.

Find somewhere quiet to study.

With there being so many places on campus, there are a few that stand out to be the best and most efficient areas to study. One of them is Hale Library and the myriad of tables scattered throughout the five-floor library. If you’re looking for an extra quiet place to study where you can get the most out of the silence, try the Great Hall on the third floor of Hale.

If you decide you need a break and want something to drink or eat but don’t feel like driving somewhere, then you have options at Hale with Einstein Bagels and a number of vending machines.

Another place would be Radina’s Coffeehouse and Roastery, with the closest one located on campus inside the Leadership Studies Building. They have a nice setup for students where you can be social but still get things done, with the obvious convenience of having coffee and tea at your disposal for those long hours of studying.

Have the right amount of material from the class to study.

It would be helpful to print out study guides. Filling out study guides helps you re-teach your brain the material.

Using flash cards is one of the most efficient ways of memorizing information. They are good for summarizing notes and learning definitions. They are also extremely convenient, considering sometimes you can’t carry your notes around with you everywhere, but notecards are more compact and you can study them whenever you want.

Lots of students either find it pointless or are too lazy to actually read their course books, when in fact they have very useful information that could be included in the final exam.

Get enough sleep so that you are well rested.

As you all probably know, eight hours is the ideal sleep time for a young adult. It has been said that staying up all night to study is actually worse than going to bed early and waking up early to study.

Eat hardy meals.

Have three meals a day. Having enough vitamin C and D in your diet is also very important. Vitamin C has antioxidants that actually enhance the body’s natural capability to get rid of toxins we take in daily. Vitamin D helps us absorb calcium, which helps our immune system work properly. Remember, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It serves as fuel for the brain in the morning and without it, we would be more sluggish.

Exercise.

Working out, running or even taking a walk could help reduce the stress that not only the mind takes on but what the body takes on, as well. So even taking an hour and walking or going to the Peters Recreation Complex can help reduce the stress that builds up during the week.

Being able to keep good habits during finals is important.

Maintaining a high standard for how you will do on your exams is also a good direction to head toward. There are many ways to succeed, and everyone has a certain way of doing things, but these are just a few tips to help along the long road of finals week.

Don Bolerjack is a junior in mass communications. Send comments to edge@pub.ksu.edu.

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Peace and quiet help during finals



Matt Binter | Collegian
Hemant Mehta, math teacher and author, speaks about atheism and his experiences involving an auction on eBay. The symbol behind Mehta is a religious symbol for Jainism. The swastika is actually a symbol for peace.

Finals don't have to be stressful



Danny Davis

Finals are upon us, and for many that means it is time to pull out hair, bite nails and snap at roommates. Long hours in Hale Library will be accompanied by frantic group meetings and a zombie-like appearance. But it shouldn't be so.

A great deal is made over finals, perhaps too big a deal. In many classes, the final exam only bears the same weight as a typical exam and, in some cases, less. Before you stress out, read the syllabus. If your final is only worth 15 percent of your overall grade, is it really worth pulling a Redbull-induced all-nighter? If you demand nothing less than perfection, your routine during finals probably is not much different than your typical exam routine. But for students who are okay with just getting an "A," finals should not be a World War III of the mind.

The situation changes slightly, however, if your grade is teetering on the edge of your desired letter grade. But if that is the case, if you are relying solely on a good final exam score to propel your course mark to a new letter grade, then you bring on that stress yourself. Instead of banking on a phenomenal final exam performance, you should have been exerting more effort during the rest of the semester.

Just for the sake of quantifying things, say you are exerting 200 percent your normal preparation exam effort on the final. It would be better if you had simply exerted 150 percent your typical exam effort on every exam and assignment. To put it simply, it is better to try harder in all aspects than to slack off the whole semester and be reduced to a walking vending machine trying extremely hard on one exam.

This philosophy works doubly great when the final exam is a cumulative one. It is likely you have already been tested on the bulk, or at least half, of the material. Your efforts on prior exams and assignments throughout the year are critical to success on cumulative

finals. Why double your efforts during finals week when you could have increased your effort by half the whole time?

All it is doing is putting undue stress on your mind and body, and driving those around you nuts. Do I care that you have had all year to learn the information, but have decided to have a cram-a-thon for one measly exam? No.

I must reiterate that this philosophy would not hold true for courses where the final is worth a bulk of the grade. I had that experience last year in Introduction to Public Administration – a course where the entire grade consisted of only two exams, one being the final.

But I would wager that in most cases, the stress from finals week is purely the result of your own doing. If you should happen to survive your finals (I read somewhere that the fatality rate is on the rise), try harder throughout the semester next time and eliminate the need for a cram-a-thon.

Danny Davis is a sophomore in journalism and mass communications and political science. Please send comments to opinion@spub.ksu.edu.

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